SCHOOL REFORM LONGITUDINAL STUDY

THEORETICAL RATIONALE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRODUCTIVE PEDAGOGIES:

A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Theoretical Rationale for the Development of Productive Pedagogies: A Literature Review

Introduction

As noted earlier in this report, the concept of **Productive Pedagogy** has been developed to serve two main purposes. First, Productive Pedagogy is directly responsive to the Queensland context in which both academic and social student outcomes are seen as publicly important. Secondly, the multi-dimensional nature of Productive Pedagogy opens up the possibility of analysing empirically what remain outstanding, unanswered questions in the history of school reform. The two new empirical questions that can be answered in an empirical examination of Productive Pedagogies are: (1) what forms of classroom practice contribute to more equitable student outcomes? and, (2) what forms of classroom practice contribute to increased student outcomes for all students? While a substantial body of research has been devoted to analysing these two questions, the SRLS is one of the first attempts to examine these questions in the context of systemic school reform.

The Classroom Observation Manual was constructed on the basis of our analysis of Newmann and Associates' (1996) concept of Authentic Pedagogy and an extensive international literature review. Preliminary statistical analyses confirmed the construct validity of our Classroom Observation Manual. That statistical analysis also suggested that the concept of Productive Pedagogy consists of four dimensions (intellectual quality, relevance, supportive classroom environment and recognition of difference). Each of these dimensions is made up of a number of items taken from the Classroom Observation Manual. Table B-1 below indicates the observational items of Authentic Pedagogy and our extension of the concept in the Authentic Pedagogy Proxy. Table B-2 demonstrates the dimensions of Productive Pedagogy and the items from the Classroom Observation Manual which make up these dimensions. It also shows the enhanced theoretical sophistication of the concept of Productive Pedagogy when compared to Authentic Pedagogy.

Table B-2: Comparison of Authentic Pedagogy and Authentic Pedagogy Proxy Observational Items

Newmann & Associates' Authentic Pedagogy	SRLS Authentic Pedagogy Proxy	Comparison
Higher Order Thinking	Higher Order Thinking	Minor Modifications
Depth of Knowledge and Understanding	Deep Knowledge	Disaggregate of AP Measure
	Deep Understanding	Disaggregate of AP measure
Substantive Conversation	Substantive Conversation	Minor Modifications
Connectedness	Connectedness	Minor Modifications

Table B–3 : SRLS Observational Scale Items by Dimension of Productive Pedagogy

INCLUDED ITEM	Intellectual Quality	Relevance	Supportive Classroom Environment	Recognition of Difference
	HOT	Knowledge Integration	Student Control	Cultural Knowledges
	Deep Knowledge	Background Knowledge	Social Support	Inclusivity
	Deep Understanding	Connectedness	Engagement	Narrative
	Substantive Conversation	Problem-Based Curriculum	Explicit Criteria	Group Identity
	Knowledge Problematic		Self-Regulation	Citizenship
	Metalanguage			

The literature review below describes the rationale for the 20 items in the Classroom Observation Manual. It has been organised according to the four dimensions of Productive Pedagogy.

Four Dimensions of Productive Pedagogy

The attempt to identify empirically which forms of classroom practice lead to improved outcomes for all students - especially those students who come from socio-cultural backgrounds traditionally associated with weak school performance - is based on a deceptively simple question. That is, the search for Productive Pedagogy is an attempt to answer the question: 'Which pedagogies will contribute to the enhancement of the academic and social performance of all students?' The SRLS response to this question is to hypothesise that there are at least four dimensions of classroom practice which are potentially necessary conditions for improved and more equitable student outcomes: high degrees of ***intellectual quality***, high levels of demonstrable ***relevance***, highly ***supportive classroom environments***, and strong ***recognition of difference***. Two things should be noted about these dimensions of classroom practice.

First, while each of these dimensions is readily defended on ideal grounds, there is no research basis for believing that school systems (anywhere) have been overly successful in consistently providing high levels of any of them to large portions of student populations.

Secondly, while high levels of all four dimensions of Productive Pedagogy, in an ideal world, may be both necessary and sufficient for all students to perform well in school, there is a substantial research basis for believing that not every dimension is equally required for success for all social-cultural groups.

In other words, while all four dimensions of Productive Pedagogy may be necessary and sufficient for all students, it is quite tenable that only one, two or three dimensions would be sufficient for some groups of students, but not all. To explain this general position, we turn to an elaboration of each of the four dimensions of Productive Pedagogy. We also deal with the observation scale items.

Intellectual Quality

The early self-fulfilling prophecy studies (Rist, 1970) and studies of streaming and tracking (Oakes, Gamoran & Page, 1992), show that one of the main reasons some students do not achieve high academic performances is that schools do not always require students to perform work of high intellectual quality. Conversely, Newmann and Associates (1996) suggest that when students from all backgrounds are expected to perform work of high intellectual quality, overall student academic performance increases and equity gaps diminish, relative to conventional teaching practices. From this research, we would generalise that a focus on high intellectual quality is necessary for all students to perform well academically.

The SRLS classroom observation indicators of intellectual quality include items measuring the degree to which student and teacher classroom practices are focused on: 1) higher order thinking, 2) deep knowledge, 3) deep understanding, 4) substantive conversation, 5) problematic knowledge and 6) meta-language.

Four of these observational items have been developed directly from the work of Newmann and Associates (1996) at the University of Wisconsin, Center on the Organization and Restructuring of Schools (CORS). 'Higher order thinking', 'deep knowledge', 'deep understanding', and 'substantive conversation' were the major components of Newmann and Associates conception of Authentic Pedagogy. The SRLS Higher Order Thinking item is drawn directly, with only minor variations, from the instrument developed by Newmann and Associates, in which it was the sole indicator of 'the construction of knowledge.' Here the focus is on the extent to which students use higher order thinking in the classroom activities. Higher order thinking requires students to manipulate information and ideas in ways that transform their meanings and draw implications. This transformation occurs when students combine facts and ideas in order to synthesize, generalize, explain, hypothesize or arrive at some conclusion or interpretation.

The SRLS *depth of knowledge, depth of students' understanding,* and *substantive conversation* items are also drawn from the CORS instrument in which they were indicators of 'disciplinary inquiry.' The main modification from the CORS instrument is that the SRLS instrument disagreggated the original CORS Deep Knowledge item. On the CORS instrument, Depth of Knowledge and Students' Understanding formed a single item. The SRLS has disaggregated the two dimensions of knowledge presented in class from students' demonstrated understanding, in order to differentiate how knowledge is taught from the understandings students demonstrate within the classroom.

Depth of knowledge focuses on the degree to which deep knowledge is presented (by the teacher, students or any other form/agent of presentation) in the classroom. Knowledge is taken to be 'deep' or 'thick' when it concerns the central ideas of a topic, discipline or discourse because such knowledge is judged to be crucial, and when relatively complex relations are established to these central concepts. *Depth of students' understanding*

focuses on the degree to which students publicly demonstrate evidence of an understanding of deep knowledge. While highly correlated with *depth of knowledge*, the need for this item to be measured separately is based on the possibility that the nature of knowledge students' publicly demonstrate does not always match that which with they have been presented.

Like the CORS item, the SRLS version of *substantive conversation* focuses on the extent to which classroom discourse is devoted to creating or negotiating understandings of subject matter. In the SRLS version, however, a slightly more specified definition was developed in relation to known sociolinguistic patterns of classroom discourse. By the SRLS definition, in classes where there is little or no substantive conversation, teacher-student interaction typically consists of a lecture with recitation where the teacher deviates very little from delivering information and routine questions; students typically give very short answers. Discussion here may follow the typical IRE (initiate/response/evaluate) pattern: with low level recall/fact based questions, short utterance or single word responses, and further simple questions and/or teacher evaluation statements (e.g., 'yes, good'). This is an extremely routine, teacher centred pattern, that amounts to a 'fill in the blank,' or 'guess what's in the teacher's head' format. The IRE pattern referred to here is well known and documented in sociolinguistic studies of classroom discourse (see, e.g. Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979). In classes with *substantive conversation* there is considerable teacher-students and student-student interaction about the ideas of a substantive topic; the interaction is reciprocal, and it promotes coherent shared understanding. In short, this item estimates the extent to which knowledge constructive talk and dialogue are occuring in the classroom.

In addition to Newmann and Associates' focus on students' construction of knowledge and disciplinary inquiry, the SRLS is also concerned to measure the degree to which *knowledge is presented as problematic* and the degree to which *meta-language* is employed in classrooms.

Knowledge is presented as problematic focuses on the degree to which knowledge is presented in the lesson as socially constructed. Typical and traditional treatments of knowledge within schools present knowledge as a given body of facts, that is, 'beyond criticism' (Luke, de Castell & Luke, 1989). *Knowledge as given* sees the subject content within the class represented as non-negotiable facts, a body of truth to be acquired by students. The transmission of the information may vary, but is based on the concept of knowledge as being static and able to be handled as property, perhaps in the form of tables, charts, handouts, texts, and comprehension activities.

By contrast, presenting *knowledge as problematic* involves an understanding of knowledge not as a fixed body of information, but rather as being constructed, and hence subject to political, social and cultural influences and implications. Multiple, contrasting, and potentially conflicting forms of knowledge are represented. In the development of a rating scale for this item, various forms of relative position on knowledge were taken as a median point between fully given knowledge and knowledge which is presented as a 'criticisable' social construct.

While this item is highly correlated with the CORS 'Higher Order Thinking' item, it represents a distinctive feature of knowledge that has been of concern to many theories of educational reform. Curriculum theorists have long been critical of the tendency for schools to present knowledge in an unproblematic fashion, since the epistemological position assumed in present school knowledge as unproblematic is one that would be inconsistent with most philosophical, sociological and (even) scientific studies of knowledge. The sociological interest in problematic knowledge rests in the degree to which differing epistemological positions are seen to have social impact. For example, in England, Bernstein's sociolinguistic analyses (1971 a&b, 1973, 1975) suggest that working-class epistemologies are more consistent with those found in traditional, knowledge as given, forms of school knowledge, a finding corroborated in Anyon's (1981) widely cited US study of school

knowledge and social class. Second-wave feminist analyses of curriculum suggest more negotiable and fluid knowledge is more consistent with the cultural norms of most women (see, e.g., Luke & Gore, 1992: Maher & Tetreault, 1994; Smith, 1990). Similarly, analyses of curriculum from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives also suggest that non-given knowledge is more consistent with Indigenous epistemologies (e.g., Nakata, 1991, 1998).

In the construction of the *knowledge as problematic* item, highest ratings were set aside for knowledge presented as socially constructed. This prioritisation is based on (1) the fact the idea of socially constructed knowledge logically implies and supercedes relativist positions, and (2) as an attempt to test curricular claims that knowledge which is seen as implicated in socio-political dynamics would be empowering to socially disadvantaged students (e.g., Connell, 1993).

There has been an extensive focus on *metalanguage* in face-to-face classroom talk since the pivotal volume that introduced interactional sociolinguistics and the 'ethnography of speaking' into educational studies – *Functions of Language in the Classroom* (Cazden, Hymes & Johns, 1972). The term meta-language refers to any instance where speakers and writers use language about language (Westgate & Edwards, 1986). These range from common instances where teachers and students refer to other spoken utterances and written texts (e.g., 'I said that you should leave the room', 'Do you remember what I said?') to instances where teachers and students explicitly develop terms to talk about the linguistic features of language (e.g., 'Was that a full sentence?' 'Where have we seen this term before?' 'What do we call that kind of question?'). Psychologists, linguists, ethnographers and sociologists alike have taken meta-language as a classroom phenomenon of educational significance (e.g., Wells, 1985).

Over three decades of classroom research have focused on the centrality of teachers' talk in 'scaffolding' (Cazden, 1988) student activity, interaction, language and learning. In the development of sociocultural approaches to cognitive development, this scaffolding has been taken as key in the building of Vygotskian 'zones of proximal development' (Newman, Griffin & Cole 1990; Rogoff, 1993). Further, the case has been made that such deliberate scaffolding through teacher talk is particularly effective in dealing with at risk learners, second language learners and cultural minorities (Moll, 1994).

What is involved is not just explicit direction of student behaviour and the setting of explicit goals and performance criteria, but as well the calling of attention by students to how language works. Beginning in the 1970s, there was an international movement towards 'language across the curriculum' (Barnes, 1992), focused on language as medium of instruction requiring an explicit focus in all curriculum areas. The claim then and now was that 'content-area reading' and 'content-area writing' needed to become objects of instruction in science, mathematics and all other curricular areas (e.g., Alvermann & Moore, 1984, Lemke, 1986). At the same time, with the increased numbers of English as a Second Language students in previously mainstream classrooms and schools, there have been ongoing calls for more attention to language-related issues in all curriculum areas.

In the 1980s and 1990s, several Australian state curricula and Disadvantaged Schools Programs have called for explicit attention to all aspects of language: vocabulary and word morphology, sentence-level grammar, and reading and writing demands of subject-specific text types (Freebody, Ludwig & Gunn, 1995). Such programs argue strongly for the development of an explicit 'meta-language' – based on systemic functional grammar (Halliday, 1999) – for talking about written and spoken texts (Cope & Kalantzis, 1995). The case is made that students should be taught a vocabulary for talking about language – a comprehensive and consistent meta-language – to both make instructional practices, assessment expectations explicit, and to enable students to 'name', deconstruct and critique

forms of spoken language (Hasan & Williams, 1997). The benefits of such an approach are said to accrue specifically in terms of students' capacity to manipulate and produce specific genres required for talk. There is then a research base that documents the use of an explicit linguistic meta-language as an approach to teaching students science and social science, as well as English and other literacy subjects (Christie, 1990).

By contrast, there is some evidence from Australian primary schools that many classrooms devote a substantial amount of instructional time to the discussion of beliefs, values and 'affect' – with limited explicit attention to teaching children 'how texts work' and to the systematic deployment of a meta-language for talking about reading and writing (Freebody, Ludwig & Gunn, 1995; Baker & Freebody, 1989). Baker (1997) attributes this to a progressivist pedagogical orientation that in fact conceals the criteria and practices of school literacy.

The SRLS observational item on meta-language, then, attempts to rate the extent to which, and the frequency with which, teachers' instructional scaffolding draws attention to how language works. This may include specification of features of written and spoken work, including direct instruction on difficult or new vocabulary, or instruction on specific written or spoken text types, or clarification of aspects of spoken language. Low rating implies that the teacher is not foregrounding aspects of language or how language works to any significant extent.

Taken together, these six observational items allow the SRLS to measure the degree of intellectual quality demonstrated by classroom practices in a way that responds both to current understandings of school restructuring and the specific Australian context. The adaptation of those four items from the CORS instruments which contribute to intellectual quality provide a consistency between the studies. The inclusion of *problematic knowledge* and *meta-language* make the SRLS measure sensitive to local context in which specific pedagogical tactics have been promoted in an attempt to generate more equitable and productive student outcomes.

Relevance

The second dimension of Productive Pedagogy synthesises a common concern that emanates from diverse interests and research findings. On the one hand, a general common concern of students in Australian schools is a need for school studies to be more 'relevant' (e.g., Walker, 1986). On the other hand, studies of cognition, curriculum design, and school restructuring all question the degree to which classroom practices address issues or problems which have salience outside of the school (e.g., Rogoff, 1991). The SRLS focus on *relevance* and has been designed to measure four different ways in which classroom learning practices can be said to relate to contexts outside of a given classroom. The four items of the observational scale which constitute the SRLS conception of relevance measure, (1) the degree to which *subject area knowledge is integrated*, (2) the degree to which lessons link with students' *background knowledge*, (3) the degree to which lessons *connect to the world beyond the classroom*, and (4) the degree to which lessons represent a *problem-based curriculum*.

Classroom learning may be deemed relevant if the knowledge presented in a lesson is integrated with, or related to some subject area of learning other than the one officially designated for that lesson. In this sense, subject knowledge integration is a step towards making school pedagogy relevant to students. For the SRLS, *school subject knowledge integration* focuses on the degree to which the school knowledge presented in a lesson is integrated across subject boundaries. School knowledge is typically segregated or divided in such a way that specific sets of knowledge and skills are (relatively) unique and discrete to each specified school subject area. Segregated knowledge is identified by clear boundaries

between subject areas. Connections between knowledge in different segregated subject areas are less and less clear the stronger the dividing knowledge boundary. In the extreme, such boundaries prevent interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary learnings.

Turning then to a consideration of the degree to which subject knowledge is integrated: integrated school knowledge is identifiable when either – (a) explicit attempts are made to connect two or more sets of subject area knowledge, or (b) when subject area boundaries are not readily seen at all. Themes or problems which either require knowledge from multiple areas, or which have no clear subject areas basis in the first place, are indicators of curricula which integrate school subject knowledge. There is, of course, a long history of curricular debate over the nature of school knowledge (e.g., Kleibard, 1986; Whitty, Power & Halpin 1998). Advocates of curriculum based on integrated knowledge include supporters of Authentic Pedagogy (Newmann & Associates, 1996) and thematic based curriculum, such as within the middle school curriculum literature (Beane, 1992).

The inclusion of the *integrated school knowledge* item within the SRLS observation instrument is based on sociological arguments which suggest that integrated knowledges are related to specific cultural codes themselves associated with specific sociological groups. Whether it be Bernstein's 1995 arguments that integrated knowledge represents the hidden curricular codes of the New-Middle-Class, feminist curriculum analyses which suggest segregated knowledge is masculine (e.g., Grumet, 1988), or Indigenous curriculum analyses which suggest integrated knowledge is associated with Indigenous cultures (see McConaghy, 1998), the question of how knowledge integration relates to specific social groups remains an open theoretical debate.

Recent curricular reforms in Australia and overseas have seen an increase in the official implementation of interdisciplinary themes. The development of competency-based, 'Key Learning Area' structured national curriculum is one of the most clear examples of an official, if limited, adaptation of integrated knowledge curriculum. England's recent curriculum reforms also included theme-based, cross-disciplinary studies. Studies from England (e.g., Whitty, Rowe and Aggleton, 1994) suggest that Bernstein's early speculations on the class-based nature of integrated knowledge may well be correct. The inclusion of the *knowledge integration* item in the SRLS instrument is intended then to open such claims to empirical verification once again.

A second way classroom practices can present relevant material is by reference to students' *background knowledge*. Bruner (1977) defines the educational process as the connecting of the 'known' to the 'new'. The shift from behaviourist to cognitive psychological models in the 1970s and 1980s marked out several changes in contemporary discourses on curriculum and instruction: most specifically, from an emphasis on behaviour to one on cognition, from skill acquisition to information processing. Schema theoretic models of teaching and learning begin from the assumption of the key significance of the learner's sum total of background knowledge, coded into structured information stored in medium and long term memory: schemata (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). By this account learning amounted to the 'instantiation' and 'elaboration' of existing structures of knowledge, rather than behaviour modification or skill transmission.

Cognitive approaches to instruction thus do not assume that learners are blank slates, but rather complex amalgams of cultural, linguistic and disciplinary knowledges. Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, then, there was an extensive corpus of experimental and applied research that argued that learning occurs optimally when there is 'goodness of fit' (Anderson, 1994) between students' prior knowledge and the new knowledge structures of curriculum and instruction.

The insight that low comprehension may be the result of a systematic 'mismatch' between students' structured prior knowledge and the structured knowledge of curriculum yielded a range of practical strategies which were implemented in the 1980s and 1990s. These included the systematic revision of textbooks to better represent the prior cultural experiences, linguistic competences, and community contexts of students (Altbach,Kelly, Petrie & Weis 1990). They also included the building of pre-reading and pre-lesson activities that both assessed the relevance of student background knowledge and, where necessary, attempted to elaborate or 'prime' existing schemata (Ashman & Conway, 1997). From a cognitivist perspective, then, the explicit recognition, appraisal and use of students' background knowledge is a necessary component of effective teaching and learning. These may involve 'priming' and instantiation of prior academic knowledge from previous lessons, subjects and courses, as readily as they may involve the use of community-based experiences and knowledge (e.g., Tierney & Pearson, 1994).

Hence, various cognitive approaches to teaching and learning stress the need to identify and build upon existing knowledge of students and, where there are knowledge gaps, to extend existing knowledge. In the 1980s, cross-cultural studies involving North American Indigenous learners showed that students' differential background knowledge had strong socio-cultural bases, reflecting available community, intergenerational and cultural experiences, texts and knowledges (Kintsch, 1986). In other words, there is an empirical case that schemata consist of shared cultural knowledge constructs, deployed through language and other semiotic systems (Kintsch, 1988).

In the 1980s as well ethnographic and sociolinguistic research began to document models of cultural and linguistic 'mismatch' between home/community and school knowledge, texts and practices as a principal cause of minority educational failure (Heath, 1983; Delgado-Gaitan, 1995; Cazden, 1992). Simply, the language patterns, institutional practices and rituals, and cultural background knowledge necessary for success in mainstream schooling environments were taken not as 'deficit' among minority learners – but as systematically mismatched, if not in direct conflict, with the learning styles, epistemological practices, and background knowledges of such students. Gee (1996) argues that students must make a difficult transition from 'primary Discourses' – forms of life, values, ideologies and practices – to the 'secondary discourses' of schooling, workplaces and other mainstream institutions. Such an explanation constitutes a 'post-deficit' model of the discrepancies between dominant/hegemonic and subordinate/marginalised knowledge. As importantly, it corroborates both the aforementioned cognitivist explanation of learning failure as schema mismatch, and the progressivist calls for 'relevance' in curriculum, 'starting with the child' and so forth.

There are, thus, psychological, linguistic and socio-cultural arguments for taking into account students' background knowledge in curriculum materials and lesson planning. The observation scale indicates the extent and frequency to which teachers explicitly invoke and use student background knowledge in the teaching of their lessons. The results should give us some indication of whether and how the invocation of prior knowledge makes a difference in the performance of groups with identifiably variable and diverse community backgrounds, linguistic competences and educational experiences.

A third way in which classroom practices can present relevant material to students is by making it clear that what is learned in lessons is, or will be, of some use-value outside of the school, in 'the real world.' The SRLS item, *connectedness to world beyond the classroom* was the sole CORS indicator of 'value beyond school', and it remains in the SRLS instrument with minor modifications (Newmann & Associates, 1996). Here, as in the CORS research, this item focuses on the extent to which the lesson, activity, or task is connected to competencies or concerns beyond the classroom or instructional context. In a class with little or no 'value beyond,' activities are deemed important for success only in school (now or

later), but for no other aspects of life. In such classes student work has no clear impact on others and/or serves only to certify their level of competence or compliance with the norms and routines of formal schooling. A lesson with a high degree of 'connectedness' makes clear connections to the larger social context within which students live. Two areas in which student work can exhibit some degree of connectedness are: (a) a real world public problem; i.e., students confront an actual contemporary issue or problem, such as applying statistical analysis in preparing a report to the city or town council on the homeless (e.g., Lankshear & Knobel, 1997), and (b) students' personal experiences; i.e., the lesson focuses directly or builds upon students' actual experiences or situations.

In some senses, connection to the world beyond the classroom is the temporal converse of linking with students' background knowledge. Instead of focusing on how lesson knowledge and activities rely on prior knowledge, *connnectedness* is focused on present or future utility. As a focus of curriculum development, connectedness has been defended as a valuable pedagogic strategy at least since the early twentieth century work of progressive educators such as Dewey (1916). Within the rating criteria of the *connectedness* observational scale item, higher ratings are for lessons in which the activities of the lesson are of actual and present utility as opposed to hypothetical or future utility. Their relevance is clearly demonstrated for students.

The fourth and final relevance item in the SRLS observational scale measures the degree to which the lesson is constructed as a *problem-based curriculum.* The concept of teaching and learning based on community and intellectual 'projects' was central to the progressivist doctrines of Dewey and colleagues. As against the teaching of skills in behaviourist pedagogy, or the transmission of canonical or disciplinary knowledge in classicist pedagogy - progressive education historically has stressed the development of projects that served specific purposes, or that deliberately attempted to identify and solve intellectual, civic and community problems. In this regard, the orientation in science and social science education towards the exploration, construction, identification, and solution of 'authentic' disciplinary and real world problems has powerful and significant historical precedents.

Much of the constructivist work in primary and secondary curriculum is corroborated by 'problem based learning' approaches to teaching and learning advocated by cognitive psychologists. Ashman and Conway (1993, 1997), for example, argue that cognition and skills are developed by a direct focus of classroom teaching and curriculum on the identification, analysis and resolution of intellectual, practical and disciplinary problems. Other models of curriculum development, such as 'action learning' (e.g., Zuber-Skerrit, 1991) and cognitive and philosophic approaches to 'critical thinking' (e.g., Norris & Ennis, 1989; De Bono, 1977) argue that authentic student learning and commitment are enhanced by an emphasis on the solution and resolution of problems.

The models of 'critical pedagogy' derived from the work of Paulo Freire also are based on the principle that pedagogy should be negotiated and constructed around the solution of immediate and pressing social, economic and cultural problems confronting learners (e.g., Freire & Macedo, 1986). In its various applications to literacy education and adult basic education, the Freirian model conceptualises teaching and learning as forms of social 'praxis' that are committed to the 'problematicisation' of the learners' social world, and the transformation of institutions and practices as a means of 'emancipatory action' and 'empowerment' (e.g., Shor, 1996). The educational focus is on community social and political problems uses of reading and writing to analyse, critique and mobilise action on relevant social issues (Lankshear & McLaren, 1995).

The emphasis on teaching and learning as forms of action aimed at the solution of social problems is shared by various applications of 'action learning' and 'action research' to schooling and education (e.g., McTaggart, 1997). In applications of action research as a

teaching/learning model to Indigenous and minority learners, Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) encouraged the reorganisation of curriculum around the collection of data on community issues and problems – with an educational focus on the generation of social and community development. Similar approaches have been applied to the teaching of bilingual minority students in the American Southwest – where the focus of study becomes community resources and problems (Moll, 1994). Unlike the cognitive and action learning models cited above, such approaches share with the Freirian approach an explicit focus on social analysis and transformation.

There is thus a strong and varied theoretical basis for teaching and learning to focus on real and hypothetical problem-solution. The disciplinary, cultural and political rationales for the focus on problems vary greatly; nor is there clear consensus on what might count as a problem, with definitions ranging from problems as disciplinary anomalies and cognitive dilemmas, to problems as pressing and visible sources of political and social inequity and oppression. Regardless, the observation scale attempts to rate the degree to which instruction appears to be focused on the solution of a problem – whether practical, theoretical or community based.

In all, then, the relevance items of the SRLS classroom observation scale provide a measure which is sensitive to four differing strategies that can be used to make school learning more relevant to students. Whether it be by integrating areas of knowledge typically presented in fragmented ways, by drawing on students' background knowledge, by connecting lessons with contexts beyond the classroom, or by constructing the lesson as a contextualised, problem-based curriculum, each of these strategies potentially contributes to the underlying relevance of a lesson. While studies of academic achievement have focused less on this quality of classroom practice, as compared to examinations of intellectual quality, there are strong grounds for hypothesing that increased relevance will improve student outcomes, especially for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Most immediately, as noted above, *relevance as connectedness* was part of Newmann and Associates' (1996) conception of Authentic Pedagogy.

Perhaps more importantly, as discussed throughout this literature review, the attempt to make classroom practices relevant may be a differentially significant factor in improving the performances of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This hypothesis is based on the knowledge that students who do well in conventional schooling must do so in highly decontextualised curriculum. We know that many (relatively) non-achieving social groups work from cultural backgrounds based on 'concrete' or contextualised forms of knowledge (e.g., Connell, Ashenden, Dowsett and Kessler, 1982). Given this, it is reasonable to hypothesise that classroom practices which are relevant may well improve all students' performance, but this will be even more true of students from socio-cultural backgrounds who have traditionally not done as well with the more decontextualised forms of curriculum commonly found in conventional classrooms.

Supportive Classroom Environment

Issues of classroom environment have been of concern to a very wide variety of educators and educational researchers. From the well known effective schools research on school and classroom ethos, to a multitude of studies on the in-class behaviour of students, to more progressive concerns for the treatment of students according to the social dynamics of race, gender and class, it is clear that students require a supportive classroom environment if they are to achieve what teachers ask of them (Brophy & Good, 1986; Doyle, 1992). Unfortunately, it can not be said that this body of research indicates that schools and teachers are always able to provide such an environment. As with relevance, the SRLS focus on a supportive classroom environment is based on the hypothesis that a focus on high intellectual quality in and of itself will not be a sufficient condition for improved student

outcomes, especially for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. To measure the degree to which classroom practices demonstrate supportive classroom environments as an independent dimension of Productive Pedagogy, five items have been developed for the SRLS classroom observation scale. These items focus on:

(1) *social support for students' achievement*,
(2) the degree to which students demonstrate *academic engagement* in the classroom activities,
(3) the degree to which students independently demonstrate *self-regulated* (on-task) behaviour (implicit behavioural and disciplinary control),
(4) the degree to which students exercise *control* in determining their learning activities, and
(5) the degree to which *explicit criteria for high quality performance* is made public in lessons.

The *social support for student achievement* item focuses on the extent to which the classroom is characterised by an atmosphere of mutual respect and support among teacher and students. Social support can be undermined by teacher or student behaviour, comments and actions that tend to discourage effort, participation and taking risks to learn or express one's views. For example, teacher or student comments that belittle a student's answer, and efforts by some students to prevent others from taking an assignment seriously, serve to undermine support for achievement. Support can also be absent in a class when no overt acts such as the above occur, but the overall atmosphere of the class is negative due to previous behaviour.

Social support is present in classes when the teacher supports students by conveying high expectations for all students (Stevens & Slavin, 1995). These expectations include the ideas that it is necessary to take risks and try hard to master challenging academic work, that all members of the class can learn important knowledge and skills, and that a climate of mutual respect among all members of the class contributes to achievement by all (Gillies & Ashman, 1996). Mutual respect means that students with less skill or proficiency in a subject are treated in ways that continue to encourage them and make their presence valued. If disagreement or conflict develops in the classroom, the teacher helps students resolve it in a constructive way for all concerned.

This item measures a dimension of classroom practice that most educators would defend as valued educational goals. But it is important to acknowledge that the degree of social support for achievement is typically not achieved evenly across student populations. This has been especially strongly documented in analyses of classroom practice linked with educational inequalities and the educational production of social inequalities. Early findings of the British sociology of school knowledge (Young, 1971; Keddie, 1971), that indicated an uneven social distribution of socially supportive classroom environments have been corroborated by more recent US studies of the relationship between classroom management and curriculum (McNeil, 1986). These studies paint similar findings to those of the US social analyses of the self-fulfilling prophecy (Rist, 1970; 1978) and subsequent Australian studies of the educational production of inequality (Connell et al., 1982; Welch, 1997). Simply put, the prevalence of low social support, especially for traditionally disadvantaged students, has been documented repeatedly. Oakes (1985) has documented the stratification of expectation in relation to streaming and track, and its relation to racial and socio-economic inequality (see, also, Oakes, Gamoran & Page, 1992). The issue of a lack of social support for young girls has been a steady theme in feminist analyses of classroom practices.

Interestingly, this specific item was modified from one developed by the CORS team, but never employed in the analyses of Authentic Pedagogy reported by Newmann and Associates (1996). Newmann and Associates' rationale for not including the item in their analysis is based on their specific need to present a conception of pedagogy that was

directed to late 1980s and early 1990s US school restructuring. The SRLS interest in providing a more complete explanation for how and why students from different social backgrounds benefit from the high intellectual quality documented by Newmann and Associates justifies its inclusion in the SRLS classroom observation scale.

The SRLS item on *Academic Engagement,* was similarly developed on the basis of an unused CORS item, and focuses on the extent to which students are demonstrably engaged in the lesson. Disengagement is identified by off-task behaviours which signal boredom or a lack of effort by students; these include day dreaming, talking to peers about non-class matters, or otherwise disrupting the class. For the purposes of the SRLS study, it is assumed these behaviours indicate that students are not engaged with the academic and intellectual work of the lesson. Conversely, engagement is identified by on-task behaviours which signal a serious investment in class work. These signals include attentiveness, doing the assigned work, and showing enthusiasm for this work by taking initiative to raise questions, contributing to group tasks and helping peers.

Like social support, academic engagement is a quality of classroom practice that educators would universally defend. The need for academic engagement has been documented from a number of different lines of educational research and is consistent with the general push for 'time-on-task' (Brophy & Good, 1986; Doyle, 1992), and a concern for increasing engagement of 'at risk' students (Finn, 1993). Here academic engagement is more broadly conceptualised in a manner consistent with more recent understandings of student engagement (e.g. Newmann, 1992). In the scoring of this item, student engagement is judged both in terms of the temporal consistency of the engagement (for how long, for how much of the lesson are students engaged), and in terms of how many students display engagement (a few students, small groups, all) (Anderson, 1994).

A related, but hypothetically independent, quality of classrooms is the degree to which students demonstrate on-task behaviours independently. The SRLS labels such behaviours as *self-regulation.* Classrooms vary greatly in terms of the amount of time spent by teachers in explicitly regulating students' behaviour. Arguments have been made (e.g., Dreikurs & Cassell, 1972; Dreikurs & Grey, 1968) about the importance of establishing clear class rules and routines in order to facilitate the smooth functioning of a class. These arguments suggest that explicit articulation of acceptable classroom behaviour, whether laid down by the teacher or negotiated with students, should occur early in a school year. Even within these arguments, it is suggested that the amount of class time spent on referring to such routines or on disciplining students would be restricted if they were properly established in the first place.

Many contemporary approaches to classroom management, such as 'Assertive Discipline' as advocated by Canter and Canter (1976) or Glasser's (1984, 1986) 'Control Theory Reality Therapy,' are based on students taking increasing responsibility for their own behaviour. The principle is to minimise disruptions to the learning process through teachers having to spend inordinate amounts of time on management matters. Here again, the normative position is one which favours high rather than low levels of implicit teacher classroom control.

Similarly, educational perspectives which emphasise learning and maximising academic engagement in classrooms all favour keeping to a minimum the amount of time spent on explicit control of behaviour. *Self-regulation* by students is advanced across a range of perspectives as an important disposition and skill which is fundamental to becoming educated. For instance, early childhood educators attempt to foster self discipline and control (e.g., Spodek, 1993; Wolfgang & Wolfgang, 1995); cognitive psychologists favour student regulation of their learning practices, developmental perspectives highlight the kinds of self regulation students can practise as they mature (e.g., Bredekamp & Rosegrant,

1995); progressives and humanists favour non-authoritarian classrooms (e.g., Ginott, 1971); critical pedagogues argue for a sharing of classroom power (e.g., hooks, 1994; Shor, 1996); and many teacher education programs assess student teachers on their capacity to manage classes while maximising time spent on learning (e.g., Kounin, 1970). All of these approaches suggest that teaching which devotes a substantial amount of verbal work to the disciplining and regulating of student behaviour is inferior to teaching which appears to devote little time to such practices. Note that a number of non-verbal strategies are linked with implicit forms of control, such as moving closer to disruptive students or employing 'The Look' (Grumet, 1988).

Achieving high levels of student self-regulation, however, is a difficult task. Australian student teachers consistently identify classroom management as one of their greatest areas of concern (Groundwater-Smith, Cusworth & Dobbins, 1998) and it is a major reason why some students choose field placements in schools which are deemed 'easier'. Stereotypically, private schools and schools which primarily cater for white, middle class populations have been characterised by lower levels of explicit classroom management (compare Willis, 1977 with Cookson & Persell, 1985). Yet the case has been put that students from disadvantaged backgrounds will find explicit forms of control more consistent with what they experience in their home lives (e.g., Delpit, 1995) than a reliance on self-discipline. Others argue that explicit forms of control are also more consistent with dominant forms of masculinity and so likely to work more effectively with male students. While explicit control may be more effective for some students, there is likely to be an inverse relationship between the amount of time spent in any one lesson on explicit control and the amount of time students spend engaged in learning. It is precisely this inverse relationship which can exacerbate differences in achievement levels between students from dominant groups and those from at least some targeted equity groups (McNeil, 1986).

In sum, there would be few educators who would advocate high levels of explicit classroom control over behaviour. At the same time most would recognise that in many teaching situations, teachers spend much more time on regulation of behaviour than they (and many of their students) would like. It is the inverse relationship between time spent on explicit control and time spent engaged in learning that justifies the inclusion of this item as part of the observation instrument.

The observation scale for *students' self-regulation* attempts to identify the amount of classroom talk spent on regulating students' behaviour. A high ranking indicates an observational period during which teacher talk rarely focused on student behaviour, while a low ranking indicates that more time was spent on behavioural matters than on substantive matters pertaining to student learning. On its own, however, this scale gives no indication of the quality of learning.

At the extreme end of supportive classroom environments, it is plausible that students not only demonstrate academic engagement and self-regulation but also begin to exercise their own control in determining the tasks on which they will engage. The SRLS observation scale item *student control of activities* focuses on the degree to which students determine classroom activities. As has been widely documented, traditional didactic modes of teaching rely on teachers, or some other authority (via the teacher), determining what is to be done within a classroom. Where students do not influence the class activities, the teacher, or some other educational/institutional authority, explicitly determines what activities students do, and hence determines how students will meet the specified objectives required within the period. Despite many attempted reforms, this form of instruction is still the most prevalent mode of teaching, as has been documented in most descriptive studies of teaching (e.g. Barr & Dreeben, 1983; Goodlad, 1984).

Student control of activities sees students influence what specific activities and/or tasks they will do in the period, and/or how these will be realised. Such tasks are likely to be student-centred, as in group work or individual research and/or investigative projects, whereby the students assume responsibility for the activities with which they engage, and/or how students complete them.

Past reforms which promoted student direction of activities included the 1970s forms of progressive pedagogy, current middle-schooling curricular models (Beane, 1993), and some forms of collaborative learning (Slavin, 1983; Slavin & Fashola, 1998). This form of instruction also is generally consistent with current pushes for 'constructivist' curricula, such as that proposed by the US National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM 1989, 1991), and more meta-cognitive research which emphasises the need for students to actively determine and monitor their learning (e.g., Biggs, 1992).

While such student control of activities is rare, attempts to promote student-centred learning are sufficiently common that critical analyses have raised questions about the degree to which student direction of activities aids students' learning. In a major study of progressive education, Sharp and Green (1978) argued that ostensible student direction of activities worked within covert forms of teacher control. From the early 1970's, for example, British socio-linguist Basil Bernstein noted the degree to which such forms of instruction relied on 'pedagogical codes' akin to social and linguistic norms typically associated with (then) middle-class social interactions (Bernstein, 1971a & b). The question of student control of activities relates directly to what Bernstein defines as 'framing,' where framing included reference to who controls selection, sequencing, pacing, and evaluation criterion in instructional discourse (see Bernstein, 1990) for further elaboration of the concept of framing).

Bernstein repeatedly points out that the different elements of instructional discourse referred to in his concept of framing (selection, sequencing, pacing and criterion) do not necessarily inter-relate (it is possible for students to control one but not others). The SRLS *student control of activities* has been constructed as a proxy of Bernstein's (1971a & b) conception of framing, which refers to the extent to which students control the manner in which activities are to be completed in the classroom.

Finally, as a measure of supportive classroom environments, the SRLS observation scale includes an item measuring the degree to which *explicit quality performance criteria* are presented in a lesson. The rationale for inclusion of this item requires substantial explanation. In his more recent research, Bernstein (1990) makes the distinction between implicit and explicit pedagogies, in part to differentiate between those progressivist pedagogies that encourage ostensible 'exploration', 'discovery', 'construction' and those traditional and behaviourist pedagogies that fix *a priori* the goals, purposes and requisite activities of students. The SRLS observation scale item *explicit quality performance criteria* directly taps into the distinction drawn by Bernstein.

One of the key principles of progressive education since Dewey has been that students should 'explore' and construct knowledge, focusing on whole activities, 'projects' and practices – rather than discrete and isolated skills. The principle critique of 'technocratic education' has been that it individuates and decontextualises human activity and agency into discrete, measurable and manageable skills (Apple, 1982). The progressivist pedagogical legacy has been adapted by a range of contemporary pedagogies, including whole language and process orientations to language arts and literacy education (e.g., Edelsky, 1996), constructivist approaches to science and social science education (e.g., Lemke, 1990), and Freirian approaches to critical literacy (e.g., Lankshear & McLaren, 1995). Despite varied foundational sources and principles, these approaches tend to stress learner creativity, and the interactional discovery of the outcomes and goals of particular knowledges and

practices. In so doing, they open up the possibility for 'negotiation' of performance criteria. The reasoning behind these models is that 'authentic', purposive or genuinely knowledge constitutive teaching/learning will generate better learning outcomes, including agency and participation in learning – and learning outcomes with stronger and more explicit applicability, relevance and transfer to broader institutional and social goals. Hence, holistic pedagogy, constructivism and critical pedagogies tend to share a discursive orientation towards 'empowerment', however variously it is defined (Gore, 1993). From such a perspective, the making explicit of performance requirements is affiliated with an 'atomised' and reductive approach to curriculum and it is seen to stultify the construction of texts, knowledge and, indeed, be counter-productive to educational development.

By contrast, there have been several moves towards the making of explicit quality of performance criteria for students. First, since the emergence in the 1970s and 1980s of competency based education and criterion-referenced assessment, there has been a major emphasis on the setting and stating of explicit criteria by and through which student work will be assessed. The assumption here, supported in 1980s schema-theoretic approaches to learning (e.g., Anderson, 1994), is that advanced knowledge of intended outcomes will improve students' capacity to meet those outcomes. These positions have been corroborated by the continued emphasis in conventional teacher education on the training of teachers to teach towards the achievement of short-term, visible and demonstrable 'behavioural objectives' (e.g., Cole, 1996). Its foundational rationales notwithstanding, then, the move towards explicit student performance outcomes has flourished in a political and institutional context that has pushed towards increased fiscal accountability and quantitative approaches to performance outcomes.

In Australia in the 1990s, a strong critique of implicit pedagogy was developed by literacy educators who argued that children from socio-economically marginal and non-mainstream backgrounds were systematically excluded by the failure of progressive education to make clear performance expectations and to, thereby, structure pedagogy towards the achievement of these outcomes (Cope & Kalantzis, 1995). Several analyses of the discourse practices and outcomes of secondary examination systems suggested that the reliance on implicit criteria and connoisseur approaches to evaluation systematically discriminated against working class and non-mainstream learners (Freebody, 1993). The aim of 'genre pedagogy' developed by Australian linguists was to give children 'explicit access' to how texts work, with criteria of teacher expectations and actual textual outcomes made very explicit through the provision of models - as against constructivist and discovery approaches to literacy (Halliday & Martin, 1996). This work appeared to corroborate those findings of Gray (1990) and others who demonstrated that explicit instruction in behavioural routines and expectations improved non-urban Aboriginal children's performance at early literacy tasks. Delpit (1988) made a similar case regarding the literacy education of African American children, arguing that explicit and direct skills instruction was required for those children whose cultural backgrounds were less apt to be able to 'create', 'construct' or 'discover' performances that might appear to be common sense or second nature to middle class, mainstream learners - an argument that extends Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) case that middle class children are 'schooled before schooling' by virtue of their prior familiarity with behavioural and discourse expectations (Heath, 1983). Finally, in an extensive study of the home/school literacy practices and discourses of lower socio-economic and migrant children, Freebody, Ludwig and Gunn (1995) argued that the lack of explicitness of teachers about their expectations of student performance was a systematic hindrance to improved literacy outcomes.

There are, then, conflicting research claims about the value of: (a) the explicit statement of student performance criteria to students; (b) the construction, discovery and/or negotiation of performance criteria as a means of establishing democratic and knowledge-constitutive classrooms; (c) the use of explicit performance criteria to scaffold curriculum and instruction.

These are accompanied by (d) conflicting claims about the efficacy of (a), (b) and (c) for specific non-mainstream, culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The scale will provide the SRLS with new evidence about the contending claims made on behalf of (a), (b) and (c) above, and serves as one of the indicators of supportive classroom environment.

The observational scale for *explicit quality performance criteria* identifies on a continuum the degree to which the criteria of performance expected of students are specified by and for students. A high ranking on this scale marks out an explicit and reiterated setting and clarification of performance outcomes and requirements by the teacher. Note, however, that a low ranking does not necessarily mark out a deliberate philosophic or pedagogical commitment to 'implicit pedagogy' in any of its variants - e.g., constructivism, whole language, etc., aspects of which are described in other items on the observation scale. Rather it marks the obvious absence of explicit performance criteria. This may be the result of neglect as much as any deliberate pedagogical choice.

Recognition of Difference

The fourth and final dimension of Productive Pedagogies identified by the SRLS, the *recognition of difference*, is perhaps the most theoretically and practically significant for explaining how to systematically improve the achievement of students from scholastically disadvantaged socio-cultural backgrounds. The review of literature below will demonstrate that a great amount of thought has gone into trying to explain how and why students from disadvantaged backgrounds do not do well in school when compared with their more socially advantaged counterparts. However, while a substantial body of research exists to support the items included in the SRLS focus on recognition of difference, it should be noted at the outset that the SRLS is one of the first attempts to assess many of these existing theories within an systematic, large scale empirical study focusing on student outcomes.

The recognition of difference is, in the SRLS observation scale, comprised of five items:
(1) *The Valuing of (Non-Dominant) Cultural Knowledges*,
(2) *Inclusivity*,
(3) *Narrative*,
(4) *Group Identity*, and
(5) *Active Citizenship*.

The item *knowledge of the curriculum explicitly values all cultures* focuses on the degree to which non-dominant cultural knowledges are valued in the classroom. Linked closely with knowledge presented as problematic, this dimension goes on to both recognise the social construction and hence conflicting nature of knowledge, and to explicitly value that knowledge associated with sub-group cultures. For the purposes of this item, determination of which cultures are taken to be non-dominant was based on a generalised (and defensible) ideal type of the traditional dominant culture historically presented as 'Australian' in most school curricula. As has been argued by many cultural analysts of curriculum, curriculum knowledge constructed and framed within this common set of ('Australian') cultural definitions, symbols, values, views and qualities, often assumes and attributes higher status to this singular culture than it would to other non-dominant cultures (see, e.g., Delpit, 1995; McCarthy, 1990).

By contrast, non-dominant *cultures are valued* when there is explicit valuing of their identity represented in such things as beliefs, languages, practices, ways of knowing. Valuing all cultural knowledges requires more than one culture being present, and given status, within the curriculum. Cultural groups are distinguished by social characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, race, religion, economic status, or youth. Thus, their valuing means legitimating these cultures for all students, through the inclusion, recognition and transmission of this cultural knowledge.

It should be noted that this item addresses one area of curriculum reform that has received much specific attention, especially so within social and linguistic studies in school curriculum. Thus it estimates that degree to which recent attempts to include non-dominant cultural knowledges are evident in actual classroom practice. In the Australian context, this has probably been most apparent in changes to history syllabi where there have been attempts to increase the coverage of women's role in history, feminist historical perspectives, Aboriginal history and Aboriginal knowledge. Similar reforms can also be readily noted in literature syllabi and most other more specific areas of the humanities and social sciences. Valuing non-dominant cultural knowledge, however, is not limited to these areas of the curriculum. It is equally possible to understand the development of science and mathematics within a historical perspective that acknowledges and presents alternative scientific and mathematical knowledge systems (cf. Harding, 1993).

The second observation item related to recognition of difference has been labelled *inclusivity*. Inclusion is a contemporary education policy concern. By inclusion the SRLS is focusing on the degree to which students from all socio-cultural groups are presented as integral members of the classroom community. Such inclusion in the classroom is typified by the extent to which students are encouraged and provided with opportunities to take full part in all lessons, regardless of their socio-cultural background. The inclusion scale is thus closely related to the 'group identities in a learning community' scale, in that inclusion does not mean assimilation. Rather, it means that all students from multiple backgrounds should have an equitable access to the social goods provided by schools. Thus, for our purposes, inclusion is given a broader meaning than is sometimes the case in the special education literature where it is used to refer to the 'mainstreaming' of special needs students (Thomas, Walker & Webb, 1998; Jorgensen, 1998) and is consistent here with the emergent usage of inclusion in European social and educational policy.

In the 1970s the theoretical work on reproduction theory (Bernstein, 1971a; 1971b; 1973; 1975; 1990; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Bowles & Gintis, 1976) provided insights into educational systems and the reproduction of inequality in respect of social class. Bourdieu created the concept of cultural capital to describe both the attitude to high status school knowledge required by students for success and to refer to those value and cultural assumptions actually built into both curricula and pedagogy. Bowles and Gintis argued there was a correspondence between assumptions built into curricula and pedagogy in classrooms and schools differentially located in class terms and the parallel requirements of different class based jobs and cultures. Bernstein, in the first instance, emphasised class based language differentials and their varying relationships with the language of the curriculum and pedagogy, and in the later work stressed the significance of the selection and packaging of curricula and their relationship to the world outside of schools in reproducing class based inequalities. The new sociology of education was concerned with how the actual packaging and organisation of curricula, including representations of various social groups, along with pedagogies, actually worked to disadvantage the already disadvantaged and advantage the already advantaged (Flude, 1974). While reproduction theory and the new sociology of education both dealt with how the 'assumptions, understandings and categories' (Flude, 1974:21) used in the classroom contributed to social class inequalities, subsequent developments in sociology of education applied these approaches to race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and disability (Thomas, Walker & Webb, 1998; Jorgensen, 1998; Gardiner, 1997; Groome, 1995; Murphy & Gipps, 1996; Spender, 1987; Deem, 1984; Epstein, 1994; Laskey & Beavis, 1996).

This reproduction literature was important, but it appeared to overstate the limitations of schooling and classroom practices for providing better opportunities for all students. A new body of research literature has emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, set against the perception that a highly skilled population for the economic competitiveness of nations was absolutely

necessary for national prosperity in a globalised economy (Halsey et al., 1997). In contrast to the reproduction literature which played down the difference schools could make, this new school effectiveness literature overstated the difference that schools could make, particularly given the growth of inequality in most societies in the recent past (see Slee, Weiner & Tomlinson, 1998). This school effectiveness literature emphasised the contribution of schooling to student academic performance, but it neglected considerations of school effects in relation to equality of opportunity issues (Lingard, Ladwig & Luke, 1997). In the United States, the work of Newmann and Associates (1996) moved well beyond the narrowness of this school effectiveness literature and sought to ascertain which elements of classroom practice, school organisation and systemic support could be manipulated to improve educational outcomes for all students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. They demonstrated that certain 'Authentic Pedagogies' could lead to improved academic outcomes for all students.

These literatures, along with those concerned specifically with race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and disability, have precipitated a concern with ensuring that differences are regarded positively and included in the culture of classrooms. Here there is both a normative commitment to the notion of inclusivity, as well as an argument that inclusive classroom practices will lead to improved social and academic outcomes for *all* students. Indeed, the classic Lewin, Lippitt and White (1939) study indicated that democratic classrooms, which were inclusive and respectful of difference, produced academic outcomes of equal quality to those produced by more authoritarian and laissez faire classrooms which paid little attention to matters of inclusivity or of respecting difference.

This scale item is thus designed to identify deliberate and overt attempts to include or exclude students on the basis of their difference from the dominant culture. For the purposes of this scale, non-dominant groups are to be identified in relation to broad societal-level dimensions of social inclusion/exclusion. Scores on this scale are determined by the extent to which non-dominant groups participate in a particular lesson, for instance a high rating on this scale indicates that there had been participation of non-dominant social groups for all, or nearly all, of the lesson, a mid range score is given when there were several instances of non-dominant social group participation in the lesson, and the lowest score is used when there is *no* participation of non-dominant social groups.

The third item of the SRLS classroom observation scale measure of recognition of difference is *narrative*. The SRLS broadly defines narrative as a series of events, actions or incidents 'chained together' in a sequence to constitute a text (Luke, 1988). Historically, narrative has evolved for purposes of entertainment, aesthetic description and recount, moral instruction, and the maintenance of kinship records and an historical archive (Goody, 1977). Various disciplinary approaches to the study of narrative have been developed. These range from psychological text grammar analyses, literary studies of narrative structure, linguistic propositional analysis of spoken texts, and ethnopoetic studies of traditional oral narratives (e.g., Toolan, 1988; Hymes, 1996). Different approaches enable the structural analysis of narrative for particular research purposes and outcomes.

Scientific texts, by contrast, can be characterised as a specialised text form for the intellectual work of the analysis of the natural and social world, for abstraction and theorisation (Halliday & Martin, 1996). In his discussion of the history of science and emergent forms of culture and technology, Lyotard (1982) critiques the broad historical distinction between expository and narrative forms of knowledge. Historically, expository prose emerged both as a mode of public persuasion (e.g., the Sophists' rhetoric) and as a mode for the development of a scientific/disciplinary 'codex' (e.g., Aristotle).

The argument made by systemic functional linguists is that expository prose forms, whether spoken or written, are specialised texts ideally suited for the transmission and exploration of

scientific knowledge, facts, data, abstraction and critical analysis. Hence, according to Lemke (1995); Halliday and Martin (1993) and others, the teaching about and through expository prose forms is ideally suited to some kinds of technical knowledges. It is precisely these sophisticated texts forms, Corson (1995), Kress (1997) and the New London Group (1998) and others argue, and the mastery of specialised discourses and registers, that creates a systematic impediment to the academic achievement of students from marginalised socio-economic groups.

In the study of narrative, there have been various attempts to describe both the linguistic, literary structures and the social and cultural significance of narrative (e.g., Tamblyn, 1992). These have been translated into various claims by literacy educators about the universal value and power of narratives, both traditional and those of popular culture. Similar claims about the significance of narrative as a starting point for early learning across the curriculum are made by early childhood educators and developmental psychologists who make the case for the psychological accessibility of narratives in early childhood. Hence, many systems for early literacy instruction and assessment are based on instructional taxonomies that presuppose and prescribe a developmental movement across age/grade ranges from narrative to expository forms (e.g., the Queensland Year 2 Diagnostic Net).

Yet claims for the educational value of narrative go beyond those that pivot around Piagetian models of development. Drawing variously on literary theory, educational philosophy and sociocultural psychology, Egan (1997) makes the argument for the universal value of 'story form' as a significant onto/phylogenetic strategy for teaching and learning. Specifically, he argues that narrative is an appropriate and effective teaching modality for scientific and moral education. What is unique about Egan's argument is his stress on narrative not just as a selected curriculum content - but also as constituting a significant instructional approach in face-to-face classroom settings. In a widely cited work, Egan (1988) advocates 'teaching as story-telling'.

Supporting research suggests that some non-mainstream learners, particularly Indigenous children, may learn best through narrative structures, because of strong oral traditions and narrative practices extant in their communities (e.g., Christie, 1985; Harris & Malin, 1994; Hymes, 1996). Similarly, poststructuralist feminist and critical pedagogy advocates - specifically in adult and adolescent education - make the case for student life stories, biographies and narrative accounts as crucial ways of bringing classroom 'voice' into play in the mainstream classroom and thereby enfranchising non-mainstream learners (e.g., Shor, 1996). Beyond claims about pedagogical effectiveness, are claims about the constitutive ontological status of narrative. For example, in her advocacy of narrative form, Davies (1993) argues that learners 'story themselves into existence', and that narrative forms are culturally appropriate and powerful modes of expression for women and girls.

The observational scale on narrative then establishes a continuum between expository, non-fictional, non-narrative modes of expression, written and spoken and those that are characterised by stories. The concern for narrative is measured in relation to classroom presentation of narratives in both form and content. As noted above, there are radically contending claims on the efficacy of each for the success of marginalised and at risk students. Consequently, the scale results should provide some evidence of the differential effects of narrative and expository teaching for particular groups of students, particularly those from non-mainstream backgrounds.

The fourth SRLS classroom observation scale item measuring recognition of difference is *group identities in a learning community*. In the 1960s' and 1970s' sociology of education there was substantial debate about cultural deficit as opposed to cultural difference as an explanation of the reproduction of inequality through schooling. The shift from cultural deficit towards cultural difference theories moved the focus of explanation from deficits imputed to

(working class) students' families and their sociocultural environment and identities towards the school and classroom practices. Indeed, the cultural difference accounts suggested that it was the reading of difference as deficit which was a centrally important factor in schools reproducing inequality. The cultural difference explanations by way of contrast problematised teacher practices and treatment of difference, in respect of both curriculum and pedagogy. In the first instance this deficit/difference debate was framed by concerns about social class. However, burgeoning literatures about gender and schooling, race and ethnicity and schooling, and more recently, disability and schooling and sexuality, have broadened the focus of concerns with differences. Indeed, Fraser (1995) has argued that the politics of recognition rather than a politics of redistribution is the politics of our time. At the macro political level there were accompanying policy shifts from assimilation to multiculturalism and beyond in relation to ethnic and Indigenous groups.

Moves in schools to counter reproductions of inequality have often been grounded in weak access versions of 'equality of opportunity' and in what Young (1990) refers to as a 'conscious acceptance' of difference or what Fraser (1995) has called 'the recognition of difference'. At times, education systems have been very successful in promoting these ideals. For instance, a conscious acceptance of difference has meant that explicit displays of racism and sexism are institutionally frowned upon, although this does not necessarily prevent such behaviours by either teachers or students. In Australia, these versions of equality of opportunity have translated into reforms such as: 'girls into maths and science programs'; Aboriginal scholarships; some elements of the Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) and English as a second language (ESL) tuition for non-English speaking migrants. These types of programs were designed to give marginalised students the same opportunities as more privileged students, but leave unquestioned the way the organisation and differential valorisation of curricula are central factors in the reproduction of inequality (Young, 1971; Bernstein, 1971a; Bourdieu, 1971).

While educational initiatives such as these have been important in giving some marginalised students access to privileged forms of knowledge, at the same time they were still grounded in notions of 'deficit'. Difference, in such cases, represents lack, where the norm is constructed as middle class, white and male. Some recent theories of social justice (Young, 1990; Fraser, 1995,1997; Yeatman, 1995; Flax, 1992) have emphasised the importance of going beyond 'equality of opportunity' as equal access definitions of justice to include concepts such as 'reciprocal respect' (Yeatman, 1995:202). Such forms of respect entail rejecting notions of deficit and of valuing marginalised cultures and identities.

Promoting 'reciprocal respect' within schools will require teachers to recognise and value group identities within their classroom. Thus, valuing marginalised group identities is not simply about those from the dominant culture 'helping' those from marginalised backgrounds. Rather, it means an active attempt to value 'others' cultures, thereby creating what some Aborigines refer to as 'two way' schools (Harris, 1990). The damaging effects of not doing this in relation to Aboriginal students in Australia have been widely acknowledged (see for instance, Gardiner, 1997; Groome, 1995; Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, 1991: 337).

The resultant normative stance was the right of groups to have their identities and differences nourished in schools and classrooms, while the earlier literature suggested that such nourishing would lead to enhanced social and academic outcomes from schooling. Such classrooms go beyond a simple politics of tolerance. Rather, such a classroom is one in which differences and group identities are positively developed and recognised, while at the same time a sense of community is created.

Recognising and valuing group identities is socially desirable because it promotes just forms of social organisation and is crucial for the development of positive self-concepts for

marginalised students. However, it also has consequences for improving academic outcomes for students from marginalised backgrounds. For instance, Ramsay et al. (1983) in their study of New Zealand schooling note how successful schools had a coherent philosophy. One element of such a philosophy was a rejection of the production of monocultural New Zealand citizens and the acceptance of the need to recognise, respect and produce cultural difference. They argued that successful schools 'tended to place emphasis on the multicultural nature of their clientele, and to foster – even strengthen- aspects of the ethnic minority cultures. In such schools considerable emphasis was given to the children's individual identity and self esteem' (1983: 281)

A significant case can also be made for constructing classrooms as a community of learners in order to improve students' academic outcomes (see for example, Biggs, 1991; Bruner, 1986; Renshaw, 1992; Renshaw and Brown, 1997; Gallimore & Tharp, 1988); see also sections in this literature review on students' direction of activities, social support and substantive conversation). Classrooms which operate as 'communities of learners' are characterised by high levels of cooperation and negotiation between students and teachers and between students and students (Brown, 1994; Brown & Campione, 1994). Such communities are unlikely to develop in classrooms where students from marginalised backgrounds are expected to assimilate into the dominant culture.

Thus, in the SRLS observation scale a classroom which recognises group identities in a learning community is deemed to exist when differences and group identities are both positively developed and recognised while at the same time a sense of community is created. For example, in a given classroom, Aboriginal identities are given positive recognition in classroom practices and representations; Aboriginal students and teachers are given opportunities to pursue aspects of the development of Aboriginal identities and cultures; all class participants value this as a positive and legitimate aspect of their classroom community; and racism is challenged within the classroom (school, and wider communities). The highest score on this scale is allocated to those classrooms where there is a strong sense of community within the classroom; positive recognition of group identities; and a supportive environment for the production of difference and group identities. The lowest score denotes those classrooms where there is no evidence of community within the classroom; no positive recognition of difference and group identities; and no support for the development of difference and group identities. In such classrooms, all students are simply treated as individuals.

Fifth the final item on the SRLS classroom observation scale measuring recognition of difference is *active citizenship*. There has been a recent concern with education for citizenship in school systems around the world (Chapman, Froumin & Aspin, 1995), including Australia (for example, see Kennedy, 1997; Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, 1989, 1991; Civics Expert Group, 1994). This concern links to the impact of both globalisation and postcolonial aspirations on the imagined communities of nations and of identities within them in a post cold war era. In the Australian context, there have been several influential reports on the topic of citizenship education, for example 'Whereas the People' (Civics Expert Group, 1994) produced for the Keating Government, and the development of curriculum kits such as 'Discovering Democracy' (Hirst, 1998) sponsored by the Coalition's federal minister Dr. Kemp.

Within the citizenship literature there is a broad divide between approaches which emphasise 'active citizenship' (Gilbert, 1993; 1997; Singh, 1993; 1998) and those which are more concerned at a descriptive level to have young people aware of the structures and practices of democratic institutions. The latter, more 'passive' (Singh, 1993) approach to citizenship education is narrower and emphasises *formal* democratic processes within existing arrangements. Ideally, we would see this approach as being subsumed as just one element of the goal of active citizenship. Active citizenship is then a much broader concept

which recognises the rights and responsibilities of all individuals and groups in democratic society to both create and recreate the democratic practices and institutions within that society. In an ideal democratic society no groups or individuals would be excluded from such practices. We would also incorporate what King (1994) calls 'transformative citizenship' into the category of active citizenship. The aim of transformative citizenship is 'to reconstruct society by developing a critical understanding of and engagement with special issues and institutions, and attempts to minimize relations of domination and promote a more just and equitable distribution of society's benefits' (King, 1994:1).

Active citizenship in schools and classrooms is about practices, not simply the inert learning of bodies of knowledge. Given the 'meritocratic' sorting and selecting function of education systems, the citizenship goals of schools are very important so that all within society, irrespective of background, occupation, social standing are able to actively participate within that society. The goal of active citizenship is an egalitarian one which presupposes that all people have the right to shape the society in which they live and work, including students in their schools. Active citizenship is thus a goal in itself and something which we would value as a 'social good'. Lempert (1996:13) suggests 'citizens cannot practise what they do not learn'. To this we would add citizens cannot practise what they have not learnt to practise. We thus recognise the centrality of schooling to the production of active and informed citizens.

The *active citizenship* element of the observation scale then is predicated upon the assumption that the practices of active citizenship in schools and classrooms will contribute to desirable social outcomes from schooling for all groups, including those from marginalised backgrounds. In this way this element is complementary to inclusivity. However, inclusivity is largely about teacher directed behaviour, while active citizenship is about a classroom and school context (including the hidden curriculum) created by teachers to encourage all students to express and practise their citizenship rights and responsibilities. While active citizenship should be a goal, as well as practised within social studies classrooms, we would suggest that it can and ought to be practised in all curriculum areas.

The literature on citizenship education in schools argues that citizenship is a desirable educational goal in its own right and is linked to positive social outcomes from schooling. However, there is little in this literature which makes an explicit linkage between the practices of active citizenship in classrooms and improved academic outcomes for *all* students, including marginalised groups. Nonetheless, it is possible that an emphasis on such practices will improve academic outcomes for some students. For instance, there are suggestions that the discussion of ethical issues in classrooms will encourage students to engage in complex reasoning (Eyler, 1981) and that the promotion of citizenship ideals is dependent upon the teaching of critical and reflective thinking (Lynch, 1992) and thus a concern with active citizenship in the classroom is likely to have a positive impact on the academic outcomes of some students. King (1994), however, shows that there is no necessary relationship between the teaching of thinking skills and the practices of active citizenship, particularly when there is no change to the regulative discourse of the classroom (cf. Bernstein, 1990). Constructivist theorists would argue that their approaches result in improved and productive academic outcomes for all students; such approaches implicitly require a democratic classroom (learning communities) and practices of active citizenship (Renshaw and Brown, 1997; Renshaw, 1998ab). In turn, active citizenship would encourage constructivist practices. Thus, whilst the inclusion of active citizenship in the classroom is a good in its own right, the inclusion of this item on the SRLS observation scale should provide some indication of the extent to which the promotion of active citizenship impacts upon some students' academic outcomes.

In the SRLS observation scale, a*ctive citizenship* is deemed to be present in any classroom in any subject domain when the teacher elaborates the meaning of such citizenship and

facilitates its practice both within and without the classroom. In order to score highly on this dimension of the SRLS scale, the practice of active citizenship needs to be obviously prevalent and evident in practices and in relationships between students and the teacher, and students and students, and in some instances will involve active participation in contemporary issues external to the classroom and school. The lowest score on this scale is reserved for those classrooms where the citizenship rights of students are neither discussed nor practised.

In all, the SRLS development of these five classroom observational measures of the recognition of difference not only provides a composite measure of classroom practice never before opened to large-scale empirical examination, they individually will yield data of significance for each of the debates to which they are responsive. In relation to improved student outcomes, the SRLS is hypothesising that students from socio-cultural backgrounds who have been traditionally disadvantaged in schooling, will require high levels of recognition of difference in order for them to reap the benefits of high intellectual quality, relevance and supportive classroom environments. While this question is of vital importance to many teachers and educational policy workers specifically concerned about the outcomes of students from scholastically disadvantaged backgrounds, the degree to which recognition of difference facilitates improved learning outcomes remains an open empirical question. The SRLS is well positioned to provide relevant evidence that has remained, to date, unavailable to educational equity debates.

Conclusion

This Literature Review has summarised the theoretical argument for the development of the specific items that make up the SRLS observation scale and the substantive rationale for grouping these items into the four dimensions of Productive Pedagogy. We have demonstrated here that our construction of Productive Pedagogy as a multi-dimensional model of classroom practice is based on a broad examination of Australian and international educational research and theory of the past three decades. It thus offers a unique opportunity to empirically examine how schools and school reform efforts might:

1) improve overall student social and academic performance, and
2) improve the systemic equity performances of schooling.

The preliminary statistical analyses have also confirmed the construct validity of the Classroom Observation Manual and the need for a multi-dimensional understanding of Pedagogy. Thus, combined with the statistical analyses presented in Part A, sections 1, 2, and 3, this Literature Review demonstrates that the concept of Productive Pedagogy is a sound empirical and theoretical contribution to current educational knowledge.

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